

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

*Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs*

*Office of Academic Exchange Programs*

**STUDY OF THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTES FOR  
SCHOLARS AND SECONDARY EDUCATORS**

*Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-14-013*

**Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI)**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the **Office of Academic Exchange Programs**, for the **Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars and Secondary Educators**.

Proposals must conform to the letter of RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

The deadline for proposals is **Wednesday, December 18, 2013**. For further information regarding the RFGP or other solicitation documents, please contact José Marrero in the Study of the U.S. Branch at: (202) 632-3337 or [MarreroJA@state.gov](mailto:MarreroJA@state.gov).

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## SECTION 1.

## STATEMENT OF WORK

### A. Recipient Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities will include the following:

1. Providing programmatic and administrative oversight of the specified Study of the U.S. Institute;
2. Coordinating logistical and administrative arrangements for participants such as pre-departure information, airport pick-up and drop-off, domestic travel, oversight of the overall program and all participants, medical treatment, and the disbursement of program funds;
3. Conducting an evaluation program that links outcomes of the project to stated program goals and objectives;
4. Providing participants with follow-on guidance and resources and facilitating continued interaction among participants and U.S. scholars after the conclusion of the Institute;
5. Managing all Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and other funds for this activity, including submitting required quarterly and final financial and program reports to ECA;
6. Informing ECA about the administration of the program including any problems, emergencies, or other issues with participants as well as progress of necessary corrective action.

### B. Department of State Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities will include the following:

1. Providing advice and assistance to the recipient(s) and Institute staff;
2. Coordinating all communications with participating U.S. embassies, consulates, and Fulbright Commissions. U.S. embassies, consulates, and Fulbright Commissions will recruit and nominate participants. The Study of the U.S. Branch will make final selections and forward the final list of participants to the recipient(s). The recipient(s) will not participate in the selection of participants;
3. Issuing participant DS-2019 forms for this program and issuing the participants' J-1 visas;
4. Enrolling the participants in an accident and sickness health benefits program for the duration of the Institute and issuing health benefits identification cards for each participant. The program office will instruct the recipient(s) how to access informational brochures and claim forms;
5. Arranging and purchasing international round trip travel for participants and disbursing international travel allowances prior to departure to the United States;
6. Monitoring the program through regular communication with the recipient(s) and possibly one or more site visits; and,
7. Conducting a formal debriefing session with the participants during their Washington, D.C. visit.

## SECTION 2.

## PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### A. Overview

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of three six-week Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars on Contemporary American Literature, Religious Pluralism in the United States, and U.S. Political Thought and

two five-week Study of the U.S. Institutes on Secondary Education.

Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars are designed to strengthen curricula and improve the quality of teaching about the United States in academic institutions overseas. Each Institute should provide a diverse group of educators and professionals with a cohesive academic program in the theme that includes a four-week academic residency component and up to two weeks (one week for Secondary Educators) of an integrated study tour to another region of the United States. Applicants are encouraged to design creative, thematically coherent programs that draw upon institutional strengths, including faculty and other resources, and upon recognized scholars and other experts from throughout the United States. In addition to the academic focus of each Institute, the Institutes should introduce the foreign scholars and educators to U.S. culture and society and should allow participants to interact with a diverse group of Americans.

#### B. Program Dates

The Institutes should begin no sooner than June 1, 2014 and conclude no later than September 15, 2014. To ensure adequate time for the recipient(s) to make pre-program arrangements, ECA will make every effort to award the approved Cooperative Agreement(s) in a timely fashion, pending FY 2014 availability of funds.

#### C. Program Administration

The recipient institution must designate an **academic director** to be present throughout the program to ensure the integration of all aspects of the academic program and intellectual continuity. The academic director will plan and implement the program, oversee its day-to-day management, and monitor program participants. The academic director should address the group on a regular basis in order to ensure that topics, presentations, and activities are tied together and woven into “the bigger picture.”

During the initial academic session, the academic director should provide participants with a concise overview of the Institute program, including its principal objectives and major themes. This part of the program should introduce participants to the academic disciplines most germane to the Institute’s thematic focus, survey the major schools of thought and interpretation, and examine current debates within the disciplines. For this reason, it is important that the program’s academic director be a scholar in the Institute’s governing discipline.

In addition, an **administrative director** or **coordinator** should oversee all program support services, including budgetary, logistical, and other administrative arrangements. This person will be ECA’s primary point of contact and the principal liaison between ECA and the host institutions. Other staff may be designated as appropriate. Graduate student assistants may be employed to carry out clerical duties and to assist with the day-to-day concerns and needs of participants, but should not be the principal point of contact for participants’ administrative concerns.

All recipients are required to send at least the administrative director (but may also send the academic director) to a briefing in Washington, D.C. tentatively scheduled for April 2014.

At the start of the Institute, an administrative orientation should provide participants with an introduction to the host campus and to the United States. The orientation should address the administrative details of the program, identify campus and local resources, and provide general information that will facilitate the participant’s adjustment to daily life in a new cultural environment. Important topics will be security, medical problems, and

the availability of foods to which participants are accustomed or which meet specific dietary requirements.

Formal opening and closing events (e.g. luncheon, dinner, or reception) should be planned. Successful events of this type typically include representatives from the college/university community as well as individuals from the larger community. These events should serve to welcome/bid farewell to participants as well as offer participants the opportunity to share about their research and/or culture.

#### D. Participants

Scholar Institute participants will consist of up to 18 experienced foreign scholars and university faculty and practitioners whose professional assignments require significant knowledge of their particular field of U.S. studies. The Institutes for Secondary Educators will consist of up to 20 experienced secondary school teachers or administrators. Participants will be drawn from all regions of the world and will be fluent or have advanced proficiency in English. They will be seeking to increase their knowledge of American life in order to enhance their professional knowledge and scholarship and to improve courses they may teach on the United States in universities and other educational, training, and research institutions abroad.

Participants may come from educational institutions where the study of the United States is relatively well-developed, or they may be pioneers in this field within their home institutions. Some participants may have had sustained professional contact with U.S. scholars and scholarship, but likely will have had limited prior study and travel experience in the United States. Participants will be varied in terms of age, professional position, and travel experience abroad. In all cases, participants will be accomplished educators, scholars, or practitioners who will be prepared to participate in an intellectually rigorous academic seminar that offers a collegial atmosphere conducive to the exchange of ideas.

#### E. Academic Residency Component

The Institute should include a four-week academic residency component. The academic residency component should be a specially designed and well-integrated seminar that imaginatively combines lectures, panels, seminar discussions, readings, debates, site visits, and regional travel into a coherent program. It must not replicate an existing lecture course, survey, or graduate seminar designed for American degree candidates.

Applicant institutions must provide a comprehensive **20 page narrative** describing the program objectives. There also should be **calendar or itinerary** of all program activities. The program description in the narrative and itinerary should be supported by a **bibliography** and a **syllabus** that indicates the subject of each class session and explains how assigned readings and other materials support the session. The readings should relate directly to the Institute theme. Course presenters should represent diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and occupational fields on the topics and issues to be explored. In addition to host institution faculty and other professionals (e.g., in government, media, religious, and civic organizations) in the geographic region of the Institute, presenters should include outstanding scholars and other professional experts from throughout the United States, as appropriate.

Early in the program, participants should have a formal opportunity to present or discuss their own research interests, work environments, and/or other educational issues in their home countries. The audience for these discussions should include other participants, host faculty, American peers, program presenters, and other interested parties.

All sessions throughout each Institute should allot sufficient time for a collegial exchange of views among participants, lecturers, and panelists. Discussion should be encouraged not only through question and answer sessions but also through organized debates, roundtables, and other fora that allow participants to actively engage with presenters and each other on the ideas being presented.

In order to give participants a multi-dimensional view of U.S. society and institutions, organizers are expected to invite prominent individuals as guest speakers. This should include relevant professionals and practitioners outside the host institution such as experts from government, the media, think tanks, professional and cultural organizations, and community groups who can bring a special perspective to the issues being discussed. Efforts should be made to maximize interaction between participants and presenters both during and outside of each classroom session. Separate budget items (e.g. honorarium, per diem, travel) may be included for this purpose, per attached sample budget.

#### F. Study Tour

All programs should include an integrated study tour of up to two weeks for the scholar Institutes and up to one week for the secondary educator Institutes. Ideally, the study tour should include travel to another region of the United States outside of the host institution. It should complement and reinforce the academic residency portion of the Institute and should include a program in Washington, D.C. All programs must include a half day debriefing session at the Department of State, which will be programmed by Study of the U.S. staff. The trip to Washington, D.C. should also involve substantive briefings by professionals from relevant U.S. government agencies, public organizations, and private institutions. If appropriate, the study tour segment may be interspersed with the residency portion of the program, though the total time allotted for the study tour should not exceed two weeks for the scholar Institutes and one week for the secondary educator Institutes.

The study tour must be arranged and conducted by the academic director and principal project staff. Staff taking part should be identified in the proposal to the greatest extent possible. Staff escorts travelling on the study tour must have demonstrated qualifications to perform this service. The proposal must clearly specify the study tour cities or other destinations to be visited, as well as the specific sites. Day trips or optional weekend excursions to various local and nearby locations are encouraged. The study tour should include travel to not more than two additional regions of the United States, one of which should be distinctly different in geography and culture from that of the host institution. Site visits and presentations included in the study tour must relate to the Institute's academic objectives and subject matter.

If the Washington, D.C. visit or any other study tour city coincides with the end of the program, the host institution may wish to allow participants to leave for their home countries directly from that site, without returning to the host institution. Such planning also might serve to reduce domestic travel costs.

*Please note: The Study of the U.S. Branch may request that the recipient modify the academic residency and/or study tour. Similarly, the recipient, in consultation with the Study of the U.S. Branch, may also wish to make program modifications.*

#### G. Independent Research/Free Time

The Institute should provide opportunities for limited but well-directed independent research. Participants

should have the equivalent of up to one day a week (excluding weekends) to pursue individual research interests, curriculum development projects, or to catch up on assigned readings. Host institution faculty from departments related to the participants' scholarly interests should be available to offer advice on their individual research projects, to help facilitate their access to resources, and act as peer mentors as appropriate. Given the likely demands of the Institute schedule, participants will be made aware that opportunities for extensive research will be limited.

Participants should have sufficient free time outside the academic sessions to pursue individual interests, such as socializing with U.S. peers, exercising, and relaxing. Recipient(s) should provide full access to library facilities, local and national periodicals, radio and television, and computers with internet access. Participants should also have opportunities to attend cultural events, such as concerts, sporting events, and formal or informal gatherings of ordinary Americans from a variety of ethnic, social, and professional backgrounds.

#### H. Housing and Meals

In general, the quality of housing should be equivalent to what senior U.S. faculty would regard as acceptable accommodations were they to spend extended time on campus as guests of the university. Housing may be in faculty residences, graduate dormitories, or other suitable locations. When possible, each participant should have a private bedroom during the residency portion, and no participant should be asked to share a bathroom with more than one or two others. Accommodations should respect each participant's privacy and comfort, and be conducive to study and relaxation. To the extent permitted by budget limitations, participants should receive up to the USG per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses at the various program locales. See <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem> for current USG per diem rates.

If possible, participants should have access to kitchen facilities in their own rooms or in a common area. A combination of a cash allowance for food and a cafeteria meal plan is strongly recommended to permit participants to cook or eat at local restaurants. In many cases, participants may experience difficulties with American eating customs due to religious or other dietary restrictions, cultural differences, and availability of familiar foods. Institute staff should be prepared to discuss such problems with the participants and seek solutions. Institute staff should consider conducting a pre-survey of participant dietary and/or religious needs in order to better accommodate those needs.

#### I. Fostering Mutual Understanding

ECA's mission is to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations. Proposals should clearly demonstrate plans for structured and unstructured interaction between participants and Americans. Wherever feasible, interactions should allow for participants to exchange views with Americans, not just learn from American hosts, speakers, and presenters. Opportunities for participants to share their research and culture with Americans can take many forms including, but not limited to; discussion sessions, conferences, receptions, poster sessions, peer mentoring programs, individual consultations with relevant academics, holiday celebrations, international pot lucks, cultural festivals, and host family experiences.

#### J. Alumni Outreach/Follow-On Activities

Follow-on activities for alumni must reflect the goals and objectives of the program and must contribute to

ECA's mission to foster mutual understanding among the people of other countries and the people of the United States. The proposal should include an outline of follow-on alumni programming (including a timeline), information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts, and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained. Examples of successful past follow on activities include, but are not limited to, structured mentoring programs, small grant competitions, alumni reunions or workshops, monthly web discussions, reverse exchanges, cooperative publications by participants and their American peers, and distance learning opportunities for alumni. Applicants should incorporate the online communities at Alumni.State.Gov into their Alumni outreach plans.

Your follow-on activities should be well developed, but also remain flexible enough to allow for changes based on the needs of the participants. Alumni activities should be financed using the line item budgeted for follow-on activities as well as significant cost-sharing by the applicant organization.

Please visit <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding/administering-grants-policies-and-resources/resources-program-administrators> and also refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

### SECTION 3.

### BUDGET

All budget guidelines must be followed. The budget should indicate any cost sharing in the form of in-kind or cash contributions to the program from sources other than the Department of State. See standard guidelines (PSI) in the Solicitation Package for information on cost sharing and the cost of audits.

A sample budget is provided as an excel document download as part of the application package for this solicitation. Please note there are two tabs in this document, the Summary Budget and the Detailed Budget. Applicants must complete both tabs. The sample budget includes an explanation of specific budget categories and line items. Unless otherwise indicated, each of the line items should appear in the proposed budget. You are urged to be as detailed and specific as possible, adding line items if needed.

Please be sure to include a **Summary Budget** on a separate page before the Detailed Budget. The Summary Budget should clearly indicate the number of program participants and provide an overall unit cost per participant, as well as a unit cost breakdown by program and administrative costs. A sample of this format is provided on the first tab of the sample budget. Please note, the summary budget includes estimated cost projections for the option years of the grant. You are not required to provide a detailed budget for the option years until ECA decides to exercise the option year.

Following the Detailed Budget, please include a **Budget Narrative** that concisely explains how costs were calculated and the rationale for including them in the budget.

Applicant institutions should attempt to maximize cost-sharing throughout the program by enlisting the support of the U.S. private sector, including foundations and corporations. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets based on program needs and the availability of U.S. Government funding.



#### SECTION 4.

#### REVIEW PROCESS

Technically eligible proposals will be reviewed for competitiveness according to the criteria stated in section V subsection 1 of the RFGP. A proposal will be deemed technically eligible according to the criteria outlined in section III. 3. entitled *Other Eligibility Requirements*.

Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with ECA's Grants Officer. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

#### SECTION 5.

#### APPLICATION SUBMISSION

##### A. Proposal Contents

Applicant institutions should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity to meet with reviewing officials, all proposals should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposal should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements. Please note that the items listed in *italics* are each separate documents, in some cases there are several documents under a single tab. Proposals should include the following items:

**NOTE:** Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist:

##### **Online Forms**

SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"

SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs

SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs"

Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

##### **Program Narrative**

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
  - a. Number and description of participants
  - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
  - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
  - d. Fields covered
  - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

#### Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

#### **Additional Information to be Submitted**

Detailed Budget (list allowable costs and any other program specific budget issues.)

Calendar of activities/itinerary, if applicable

Letters of endorsement

Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)

First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

3. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

4. Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

## **B. Application Submission**

**The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call José Marrero at (202) 632-3337, Study of the U.S. Branch; Fax: (202) 632-9411; email: MarreroJA@state.gov.**